

● (1425)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, unfortunately I have not been given notice of this question, so I cannot comment on this particular point. The point I was making in answer to the question by the hon. member's leader is not that there were no rigs leaving. The point I was making was that there is not a fundamental difference between the situation this December, as of last week, and 12 months ago. I have conceded that the national energy policy obviously does expect the Canadian government and the Canadian people to receive more money from the industry.

In so far as the particular case pointed out by the hon. member is concerned, I can look into that. I said, once again in answer to the hon. member's leader, that we are looking at all these problems case by case and testing our national energy policy as it would apply to particular industries and particular corporations. If we have their co-operation, as we have in the case of some of them, it is possible that we will be able to take corrective measures.

Mr. McKnight: Madam Speaker, if the Prime Minister does not care about the 15 workers in Kindersley, Saskatchewan, may he care about the workers in Ontario and Quebec—

An hon. Member: He did not say that.

Mr. McKnight:—who are going to be done out of their jobs in the auto manufacturing and heavy truck manufacturing industry because of the policies of his government, which are arrogant and inflexible toward the energy area of my part of my country, and also the Prime Minister's country. The Prime Minister is causing unemployment in Ontario and Quebec, not just in western Canada.

What is the Prime Minister going to do about the potentially unemployed of Ontario and Quebec, if he does not care about the unemployed in Kindersley, Saskatchewan?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I fail to see how the hon. member can draw from my answer the conclusion that I do not care about the unemployed in Saskatchewan. On the contrary, I indicated that if he had given me notice of his question I would perhaps have been able to look at that particular case and, with the assistance of the Minister of Employment and Immigration and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, indicate if there is anything we can do about that particular case.

For this, we must, first of all, have the co-operation of the industry itself and, second, we cannot assume that any threat by any taxpayer to leave if his taxes are increased is necessarily based on fact. It is certain that all taxpayers—and the petroleum industry is no exception—do not like to pay a higher share of their profits to any government.

The point I am making to the hon. member is that we have to see if our energy policy is good not only for the particular industry about which the hon. member seems to indicate concern, but also if it is good for the taxpayers and consumers

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of Canada. This is the main concern we have expressed in our national energy policy.

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FINANCE

RIISING INTEREST RATES—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Contrary to what he promised during the election campaign, the Minister of Finance made it clear yesterday that the Canadian interest rate policy will remain inextricably linked to that of the United States. Today a number of major banks in the United States predicted that the prime rate in their country will rise to 25 per cent, an astronomical figure. If this government continues its policy of linking our rate to the American rate, that will mean mortgage rates going up beyond 20 per cent. It will mean that businessmen will suffer. It will mean an increase in debt loads on farmers. Is there any limit which the Government of Canada will set for itself, or will it inextricably follow the United States to the economic disaster which it is establishing and import that disaster to Canada?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, if the hon. member concludes from the answer given yesterday by the Minister of Finance that our policies are inextricably linked to those of the United States, I suggest he return to *Hansard* and read the answer given by the minister. Because the minister said exactly the contrary yesterday. He said that our policies were not set by the United States. He said that the Canadian government was following its own policy, but that naturally the money markets in the world do have an influence on each other. That is not saying that we are linking our policies to those in the United States; rather, it is saying that all the money markets in the world will be inevitably influenced by each other unless a particular country chooses to embark upon exchange controls.

● (1430)

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister promised an independent rate during the campaign. Yesterday, the Minister of Finance said that the rates between Canada and the United States are inextricably linked. If that is not saying that we do not have an independent policy, I do not know what one would have to say to make that assertion.

Considering that the Minister of Finance has already acknowledged that his budget forecasts are wrong, that we now have more than one million unemployed—and the Minister of Finance has acknowledged that that number will go up—and that interest rates again are shooting up in both countries, will the Prime Minister recognize that the budget which was brought down a while ago is now completely out of date, will he acknowledge that we have an economic crisis, and will he promise a new budget will be brought down in the new year when Parliament returns?